

Commonsense about Ahmadiyyat

by
FAIZUR RASUL
(Second Edition)



Faizur Rasul



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
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In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Ever Merciful
We praise Him and invoke His blessings on His noble Prophet

Foreword

This booklet is a personal account of a former Shavian Socialist who stumbled on to the truth and embraced it. Honest and simple in approach, the author presents woefully the endless bickering which occupies a great majority of the present day leaders of Islam in discarding the rope of God Almighty and labelling others as outside the pale of Islam.

Having accepted true Islam, the author made a careful study of the views of those who rejected the continuation of prophethood in Islam. He was able to discern from their writings that their objections, sincere as they appeared to be, defied the dictates of commonsense. In fulfilment of past prophecies a reformer was to appear in the fourteenth century who was to be a reflection of the Holy Prophet as the moon reflected the light of the sun. The reformation he brought about met with bitter opposition but his mission continued to progress.

It is to this message that inspired the author so profoundly that he invites others, and in particular those who migrated from the Indian sub-continent to live in the West, to accept because now that the truth has become manifest, we should not keep ourselves away from it.

Shaikh Mubarak Ahmad,
Imam, London Mosque

WHY I BECAME AN AHMADI OR COMMONSENSE ABOUT AHMADIYYAT

I have been living in Britain, since I came from West Bengal in the Twenties. Of that first 35 years I have been a Shavian socialist or a disciple of Bernard Shaw—a near communist. For the last 15 years I have been gradually returning to Islam, beginning with N. J. Dawood's English translation of the Quran, published by Penguin, which I accidentally found in a bookshop. Further study of other translations of the Quran, Hadith and Islamic literature continued. About eight months ago another accident in the Birmingham Central Library made me notice the book *TADHKIRAH* which has brought me to Ahmadiyyat.

My Shavian days have been narrated in my book *Bengal to Birmingham* (published by Andre Deutsch in 1967) and it is not proposed to repeat them here.

Though a translation, the Quran made me feel that it could not have come out of the mere human brain of a seventh century Arab of no education, as the secular literature of Shaw, Wells, Toynbee and others had been telling the world that it did. God throws out challenges in the Quran, but no Arabic professor of great learning has been able to produce a small chapter like the Quran's in all these fourteen hundred years. The first English translator of the Quran in 1649 told his 'Christian readers' that the 'Al-Coran is a poison that hath infected a very great, but most unsound part of the Universe'. The subsequent English translators have been modifying this opinion gradually over centuries until the last of them, A. J. Arberry in 1962, acknowledges his 'gratitude to whatever powers or Power inspired the man and the

Prophet who first recited these scriptures'. This is encouraging. If we wait a little longer, the English will accept the Quran for what it is: 'as a final expression of God's will and purpose for man,' says Arberry on behalf of the believers. (Quoted from the *Quran Interpreted*, Oxford U.P. World's Classics 596.)

Although I have gone through six Qurans by six different translators, I have now settled down with only two of them. One is by A. J. Arberry and the other is by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan. The former's prose-poetic style and language are beautiful, though many allegoric passages are obscure. The latter's, short of commentary, is the most meaningful of any throughout, though, I think, the literary etiquette has prevented him from using more familiar and fitting words in some places because his predecessors have already used them.

Like most Muslims in our age, I lived an irreligious life until I read the Quran for the first time at the age of 60. Then intellectually I felt that I should live a religious life, but physically I felt it was burdensome; I was encumbered with what the Quran calls 'shackles up to the neck'. Fortunately I like to read the Quran every day. A certain point or meaning gripped my mind, and I forced myself to pray, but only the 'farz' and not the 'sunnat', and not always at prescribed times; the dawn prayers I performed when I got up at 8 or 9 in the morning. When another point in the Quran had hit my mind, I began to pray 'sunnat' as well; yet another point struck at my mind, and I began to pray at the right time, including dawn prayers, though it was very hard to get up so early. In the course of years the shackles of prayers have been taken down completely, so that I can get up at any time to pray in the night. The same happened with regard to 'zakat' and other commands and prohibitions. I remember how I hung on to my money and hated to part with it. Then the Quran unshackled me, and I began to pay zakat mainly through Oxfam and other British charitable organisations operating abroad. In the course of years the shackles about almsgiving have been taken down, so that for some time now I could not care less about money. I have reduced my desire for the things of this world to a minimum, which

desirelessness gives peace and tranquillity of mind promised in the Quran, but not to the extent of Hindu sannyasis. In this way in the course of years I have been modelling my life according to God's commands and prohibitions embodied in the Quran, or the Five Pillars of Islam: prayer, zakat, fasting, pilgrimage and jihad or strivings.

The more I read the more Islam inside the Quran made sense to me, but Islam in practice out in the Muslim world made me dissatisfied. It seemed Muslims had separated themselves from Islam. To what the Quran says nobody pays any heed. It looked as if the Muslim world was anti-Quran. The core of Islam—the religion of obedience to God—is the belief in God, the Hereafter and righteous living in this world; surrounded by the Sharia (law of Islam) to bring out this principle effectively. The Muslims are far from that; they are not ruled by Sharia law any more; they are like non-Muslims, and naturally their plight is worse than ever. Large numbers of them have alleviated their wants by running out of their 'Islamic' countries and settling in un-Islamic lands, where they rejoice in living as imitation Westerners. The Muslim world with its 40 nation-states is frantically trying to be modern, nationalist, socialist, communist, democratic and secularist, except being Islamic. This has created rampant disunity, so that individuals are flying at each other's throats, and Muslim states are either fiercely jihading against each other, or are on the verge of it. This spectacle is not a shining example for the non-Muslim world to take to Islam. The Muslim nation or Umma is fragmented and there is not a central authority as of pristine Islam to keep 'holding the rope of Allah', as commanded by God in the Quran. Then came Ayatulla Khomeini's Islamic Republic of Iran, which declared that both Western and Communist civilisations were rebellious traitors to God. This sounded promising for a time . . . This is what I had in my mind before I came to know Ahmadiyyat.

One day in February 1980 in Birmingham Central Library I noticed a book called *TADHKIRAH*, described as 'English translation of the dreams, visions and verbal revelations vouchsafed to the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace', by Muhammad

Zafrulla Khan. This arrested my attention and I took the book home. Reading this book I felt the same sensation as I had felt when reading the Quran for the first time 15 years ago. I said to myself: This is it! As I finished reading the book, I made up my mind at once to join the Ahmadiyyah Movement, and I wrote to that effect to the Imam of the London Mosque. Once I had a book from the same Library on Bahaism, which did not attract me. I have been neutral towards the sectarian differences in Islam and did not want to take interest in any one of them in particular. Plague on their houses, I thought. I would live, I thought, according to the Quran as I understood it, which held my interest deeply. I did not even want to trouble about the Hadith, as I thought then that it was unnecessary; but I have changed my mind about that since I had read Sahih Muslim. However, this matter of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (1835–1908) as being the Promised Messiah-Mahdi-Prophet-Messenger of God in our sophisticated age is extremely serious. If this is true, and we do not believe in this, or if this is not true, and we believe in it, we will be sitting on a volcano. That is the dilemma!

The more I read Ahmadiyyah literature, the firmer and firmer my belief became. Soon I took the ‘ba’iat’ or oath of allegiance to the Ahmadiyyah Movement, that is, signed the document. It is this:

CONDITIONS OF BAIAT (Allegiance)

16 Gressenhall Road,
London SW18 5QL

A person who joins the Ahmadiyyah Movement must firmly make up his mind:

FIRSTLY, that up to the day of his death he shall abstain from worshipping anyone but Allah.

SECONDLY, that he shall keep away from falsehood, adultery, gazing at women other than near relatives, cruelty, dishonesty, riot, rebellion and, in short, any kind of evil, and shall not allow himself to be carried away by his passions, however strong they may be.

THIRDLY, that he shall say the five daily prayers without fail, according to the command of God and His Prophet; and to the best of his ability, he shall try to offer Tahajjud (night) prayers to invoke the blessings of Allah upon the Holy Prophet, to ask forgiveness for his own sins and pray for Allah's help; and that, remembering Allah's blessings, he shall always praise Him.

FOURTHLY, that he shall in no way harm Allah's creatures in general and Muslims in particular by giving way to his passions –neither with his hand nor tongue nor by any other means.

FIFTHLY, that in every state of joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, he shall prove himself faithful to Allah and in every condition he shall submit to Allah's Will, being ready to bear every kind of insult or pain; and in the hour of misfortune, he shall not turn away from Him but rather draw closer.

SIXTHLY, that he shall not follow vulgar customs and shall guard against evil inclinations and shall submit himself completely to the authority of the Holy Quran and make the Word of Allah and the sayings of His Prophet the guiding principles of his life.

SEVENTHLY, that he shall give up pride and haughtiness and shall pass his days in humility, serenity, courtesy and meekness.

EIGHTHLY, that he shall consider his religion and the dignity and welfare of Islam dearer than his life, wealth and children and, in short, dearer than everything else.

NINTHLY, that he shall for the sake of Allah show sympathy towards Allah's creatures and, to the best of his ability, he shall use his natural gifts for their welfare.

TENTHLY, that he shall establish a brotherhood with me (the Promised Messiah) on condition of obeying me in all that is good and shall maintain this to the day of his death; and this relationship shall be of such a high order that the like of it shall not be found in any worldly relationship either of family or of master and servant.

BA'IAT (INITIATION) FORM

To: HAZRAT AMEER-UL-MOMINEEN KHALIFATUL
MASIH III,
HEAD OF THE AHMADIYYA JAMA'AT,
RABWAH, PAKISTAN.

I have gone through the conditions of ba'iат and have agreed to them and I now pray that my ba'iат be accepted.

I bear witness that Allah alone is to be worshipped. He is One, having no partner.

I promise that I will try my best to guard myself against all kinds of sins.

I will never set up equals to Allah and will give precedence to my Religion above all worldly considerations.

I will try my best to act upon all the Laws of Islam.

I will obey you in everything good that you will tell me.

I consider the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to be the Seal of the Prophets and also believe in all the claims of the Promised Messiah.

I shall consider the propagation of Islam as the first of my duties and will try to learn the Holy Quran and the Traditions.

I beg pardon from Allah, my Lord, for all my sins and turn to Him. O my Lord, my Allah, I wronged my soul and I confess all my sins, pray forgive my sins because there is none else except Thee to forgive them.

Signature

Address

.....

Date

Tel.

This was no hardship for me, as I had already been living nearly by those conditions to which I came through the Quran and Hadith by my own efforts. A couple of more items to add to those was no difficulty. Reflecting further, except a minority, most Muslims are Muslims whatever way they live because their parents called themselves Muslims whatever way they themselves lived—mostly by their whims. But an Ahmadi Muslim has to pledge himself to live the Islamic life as was in the beginning of the history of Islam, which makes sense. I know a few Muslims who intellectually accept the claims of the Promised Messiah, but will not take the ‘ba’iat’ because it will be hard for them to live by Islam, and also it involves great monetary sacrifices.

When I had been an Ahmadi Muslim for a few months, some Ahmadi friends suggested I should write on why I had become an Ahmadi. The old Shavian in me suggested I should first study the opposite view of the orthodox Muslims on Ahmadiyyat or Qadianism. I wrote to Dr M. Ahsan of the Islamic Foundation in Leicester—the Orthodox Headquarters—requesting him to sell me if they have, or suggest to me the top ranking books which would effectively refute the claims of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. He sent me the names of three books and their authors, and said that he was glad that I was studying this subject. In a Muslim bookshop in Birmingham—Paigahme Islam—I readily found these books: *Qadianism* by S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi; *His Holiness* by Phoenix; *The Qadiani Problem* by S. Abul A’la Maududi, including two small articles by Sir Muhammad Iqbal. They are well known authors of Sunni Islam in what was India and staunchly anti-Ahmadi. The books are well constructed and written by honest, sincere and eminent Islamic scholars; so are the Ahmadi Islamic books and their authors. It would be the height of folly to impute dishonesty or bad motives to either side. Both sides believe what they believe sincerely, though one side must be wrong. (Sincerity by itself does not ensure truth; Hitler was sincere but neither right nor true.) The crucial points are two in this case: One, what is the meaning of *Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets?* (Quran 33:41), and, two, is Jesus in person to come

from heaven as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, or God would send someone of similar spirit and power as had Jesus? As I am not an Islamic scholar nor do I know even a bit of Arabic, I am not competent to enter into this controversy scholastically. But I still adhere to being an Ahmadi Muslim and will explain why in my own commonsense way.

The logic of these three books mentioned above is the same logic one finds in the books by Western Arabic scholars or the orientalists writing against the prophethood of our Holy Prophet Muhammad, or the Jewish scholars writing against Jesus in his time and thereafter. Maulana Hasan Ali Nadwi says in his book, *Qadianism*, that he is an impartial historian with no axe to grind; that may be; we know of another impartial brother historian, Arnold Toynbee, who says in his book, *Mankind and Mother Earth*, that Moses and the Israelites had never been to Egypt, nor did they ever cross the Red Sea; they came from central Arabia and settled in Palestine; we take it that Maulana Nadwi rightly would not accept that opinion because it contradicts the Quran, though it is from an impartial historian like himself. Phoenix in his book, *His Holiness*, scrutinises Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani through 'modern psychology', and ascribes to him a naive lack of awareness of his own unconscious motives. Yet the father of modern psychology, Sigmund Freud, in his book, *Moses and Monotheism*, says that Moses was an Egyptian prince and not an Israelite, who became the leader of the Israelites and foisted on them the Akhnatonian monotheism. We take it that Phoenix rightly would not accept Freud's assertion because it contradicts the Quran. So much for impartial history and modern psychology . . . The real concern of Maulana Abul A'la Maududi and Sir Muhammad Iqbal was that the prophethood of Mirza Sahib, *in intense opposition of the orthodox Muslims*, was destroying the unity of Islam as a whole and particularly Islam in the Indian sub-continent. This was also the argument of the polytheists of Mecca against our Holy Prophet. Sir Muhammad Iqbal (died in 1938) even wanted the British Government of India to restrain the Ahmadiyyah Movement . . . The Ahmadiyyah con-

tention was that there was no real unity in the Muslim world, and that Islam was thoroughly disarrayed which necessitated the *sending down* of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi in the fourteenth century of Islam, just as the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was *sent down* in the fourteenth century after Moses. The Jews were promised top places in the world if they carried out God's commands. They failed, and we know what happened to them. Similarly, the Muslims were promised top places if they kept to Islam. Since their position is not the top place but very low, they must have failed Islam. In the case of the Muslims it is not impossible to right the wrong position because they, unlike the Jews, have kept their scripture—the Quran—intact without interpolating. But they will still need a reformer 'sent' by God. How the Muslims came to their present low condition we will now tell in detail.

When the Muslim world was still under Western imperial control, Sir Muhammad Iqbal wrote his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, which implies the construction of Islam left by the Holy Prophet and followed properly by his Righteous Caliphs had been deconstructed in the course of centuries which needed reconstruction, but he gives no programme how to do that. Apparently, he and others thought that jihading and gaining political independence from the West alone would do the needful. It did not. We know now in 1980 that independent Muslim states do not unite. Instead they buy deadly war weapons from anti-Islamic Western and Communist countries in order to jihad fiercely against each other—Pakistan v. Bangladesh; Egypt v. Libya; Iraq v. Iran—and others are on the brink of it. With revealed knowledge of the unseen from God, if the Promised Messiah called this Muslim world 'sour milk', which Sir Muhammad Iqbal did not like, it is now palpable and stinking enough for all to see it needs refreshing. To make things more clear, we will go through one particular aspect of the history of Islam which is not popularly known or talked about.

After the demise of the Holy Prophet, the first Caliph, Abu Bakr, with that faith which moves mountains, set himself simply

and sanely to organise the subjugation of the whole world to Allah . . . ‘Had there been in Islam a score of men, younger men, to carry on his work, of Abu Bakr’s quality, it would certainly have succeeded,’ says even an unbeliever like H. G. Wells in his *Outline of History*.

Although the expansion of Islam went forward rapidly and miraculously through the reigns of the first, second and third Caliphs, and in 25 years the Middle East and far beyond to the East and West became Islamic, there was at first a little intrigue against Abu Bakr, a little more against the second Caliph Umar, and then a great hullabaloo against the third Caliph Othman, who was killed by the Muslim enemies of Islam. The fourth Caliph Ali had to spend his time quelling civil wars and trying to re-establish law and order, disputing his caliphate with Muawiya, the Governor of Damascus, who ultimately deceived him and usurped the caliphate which he made a hereditary monarchy; and this also made the priesthood subservient to him. The upright Companions of the Holy Prophet stayed away in Medina from the brawls. Caliph Ali was killed by his supposed followers. Thus ended the Righteous Caliphate in bare 30 years as prophesied by the Holy Prophet. The dying Caliph Othman told his murderers: ‘If you kill me today, then remember that Muslims will never, till the end of days, be reunited in prayers nor in battles against the enemies of Islam.’ This curse is still with us; sects proliferated, excommunicating each other; matters had been worsening century by century, needing mujaddids or reformers and then the Promised Messiah-Mahid.

The First Century Hijra

The third Caliph Othman, the fourth Caliph Ali and Imam Hussain were branded as heretics and apostates by the subservient section of the as yet incipient priesthood who got them murdered.

The Second Century Hijra

The great sufi Junaid of Baghdad, Muhammad Al-Faqeeh, Imam Malik Bin Ans and Imam Shafa'ee, all were learned saintly men, who were branded as apostates and heretics.

The Imam Abu Hanifa was the founder of the Hanifite School of Jurisprudence, which is one of the four great Sunni schools of Islam in the Muslim world. He was branded as an apostate and an infidel, and was arrested, imprisoned, tortured, poisoned, and he died as he prostrated in prison. Later his tomb was dug up, his body exhumed and burnt and a dog was buried in his grave, which was made a public lavatory in Baghdad. The benighted priesthood declared that all Hanifites were also out of the pale of Islam—infidels. This being so, the great majority of non-Arab Muslims, presumably including our four author-ulemas, Abul A'la Maududi, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi and Phoenix, are all infidels according to their spiritual ancestors and brother ulemas of the second century Hijra.

The Third Century

The great Imam Bukhari whose *Saheeh Bukhari* is regarded as next only to the Holy Quran, was also branded as an apostate, and three thousand benighted ulemas and mullas had given evidence of apostacy against the Imam. He was exiled from Bukhara to Khartang, where he found no peace. He prayed in his anguish to Allah, Who soon caused him to die.

Another great learned man was the Imam Ahmad Bin Hanbal, who was imprisoned and shackled with four heavy chains and was made to walk from Tarsus to Baghdad, where during the Ramadhan he was lashed in the burning sun, even in the last ten days of the Ramadhan. This savagery of the priesthood was because he said that the Quran was not a creation like the rest of God's creatures, which he repeated as each lash fell on his back, until he fell down unconscious.

The eight learned sufis like Zunnoon, Sahl Testari, Ahmad Bin Yahya, Abu Saeed Kharaz, Ibn-i-Hannan, Abu Abbas Bin

Ata, Abul Mohsin Al-Noori and Imam Nisai, all were accused and rounded up and branded as either apostates or renegades or heretics or backsliders or shias or atheists or what not, and imprisoned, chained, tortured, and recommended to the King that they should be executed, otherwise they would bring disbelief in the land . . .

As the executioners with sword in hand came up, Al-Noori quickly advanced forward and said: 'I believe in self-sacrifice and service to our fellow beings. I beg the King to command that I should be beheaded first, so that my friends may have a few more minutes to live in this world, which is irreplaceable by a thousand years in the next.'

The King stopped the execution and ordered the Court Qadhi to review their cases and report to him.

The Qadhi's report was favourable: These venerable sages are more true believers of the unity of God than anyone I know.

The King freed the accused with many apologies, honour and presents.

The Fourth Century

Mansoor Al-Hallaj was the famous sufi in his time. In his ecstatic meditations he sometimes felt himself absorbed in the Godhood, and cried: 'I am the Truth!' Living in the hard crystalised exoteric Islam, the priesthood or the ulemas and mullas could not fathom the depth of esoteric Islam of the sufis, and they swooped down and pounced on him. They arrested, imprisoned, lashed, severed his limbs and crucified him. What brought him his troubles were these verses:

I am He whom I love, and whom I love is I,
We are two spirits dwelling in one body.
If thou seest me, thou seest Him,
And if thou seest Him, thou seest us both.

Standing by the gallows before his crucifixion, Al-Hallaj prayed and part of his prayers was this: ' . . . And these Thy servants who are gathered to slay me in zeal for Thy religion and in desire to

win Thy favour, forgive them, O Lord, and have mercy upon them; for verily if Thou hadst revealed to them that which Thou hast revealed to me, they would not have done what they have done; and if Thou hadst hidden from me that which Thou hast hidden from them, I should not have suffered these tribulations. Glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thou doest, and glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thou willest.' (The verses and prayer are quoted from *Islam*, page 146, by Alfred Guillaum, Pelican Books Ltd.)

The Imams Abul Hasan Ashari, Abu Bakr Shibli and Abu Othman Maghrabi, all great scholars of Islam, were also denounced as apostates, heretics and renegades.

The Fifth Century

Even the famous and renowned Imam Al-Ghazzali in Baghdad did not escape. The ulemas branded him as an atheist, free thinker and an apostate, whose books were 'unorthodox, un-Islamic', they said. His books were ordered to be burnt and Muslims were forbidden to read them. His followers, if any, were ordered to be beheaded... A few centuries later, his books became what we may call the 'best sellers' in both the Muslim world and Christendom.

It is said that Al-Ghazzali's family had found a piece of paper attached to his garment in which he died; it read: 'This is not me! This is a cage in which I lived as a bird. Now that the Lord has set me free, I have flown away.'

The Imam Ibn-i-Hazam was a great scholar whose writings and arguments traced back to the Holy Quran and Hadith, which showed the fallacies of the lesser scholars and ulemas, who banded together and got the Imam banished to die in the jungle of Labla (Spain).

The Sixth Century

Abd al-Qadir Jilani was at first a well-known jurist of exoteric Islam, then he became the Sultan of Sufis, whose spiritual influ-

ence has lasted 800 years down to the present day. He was denounced as a heretic and an apostate by a divine called Allama Abul Farah Abdul Rahman Jauzi, with two hundred supporters backing him in his nefarious activities.

Allama Ibn-i-Rushd (Averroes of European fame) was Qadhi of Seville and Cordova (Spain), philosopher, physician, mathematician, author of the famous commentaries on Aristotle, and many other books on other subjects. He is one of the five greatest Arabs of the book, *The Arabs in History*, by Professor Philip Hitti. The ulemas of the time successfully denounced him as a heretic, renegade and dismissed him from his high position, and exiled him and burned his books, but did not kill him, because he observed the Shariah laws properly all his life. Later he was recalled and partly reinstated.

The great Andalusian Sufi, Muhiyyud-Din Ibn' Arabi, used to say a prayer which began: Enter me, O Lord, into the deep of the Ocean of Thine Infinite Oneness . . . That is the first sentence of the book, *What is Sufism?*, by Martin Lings, written nearly at the end of the fourteenth century Hijra (1975) about someone who lived in the sixth century Hijra. This was the man and sufi whom the ulemas of the time declared an infidel and backslider and Apostate the Great!

Another great sufi of this century was Sheikh-ul-Ashraq Shahab-ud-Deen Suhrawardi who was imprisoned and was then strangled to death.

There were two more famous sufis the heresy-hunting ulemas and mullas plagued in that century: Fareed-ud-Deen Attar and Shuaib Bin Hasan Al-Maghribi.

The Seventh Century

Sheikh Abul Hasan Shazli and Sheikh Aziz Bin Abdus Salam were both notable sufi saints and authors, yet they were declared heretics.

Nizam-ud-Din Aulia, the sultan of saints of Indian fame, buried in Delhi, was denounced for listening to music. In his trial

he produced evidence that the Holy Prophet had listened to music. This was not good enough for the mufti, who wanted the accused to produce evidence that Imam Abu Hanifa had sanctioned listening to music, since they were all Hanifites. As this could not be done, the accused was upbraided and branded as a backslider.

The Imam Ibn-i-Taimiyah was a highly distinguished scholar, who was imprisoned for a long time in Egypt and was tortured and died in prison. Some hours before his death, the Minister from Damascus, who originally pounced on him, came to him for his forgiveness. The dying Imam said: 'I forgive you and all those who opposed me, because they did not know I was right. I also forgive the King Nasir by whose command I was imprisoned, because his advisers did not know the truth.'

Shams Tabrezi was a noble saint of his time, and was the guru or mentor of some who became famous saints later. For saying that hymn singing was quite lawful, he was skinned alive.

Jalal-ud-Din Rumi of whirling dervish fame, Founder of Maulvi Order of Sufism and the author of the famous *Mathnavi*, was declared an apostate, as were all who followed him.

The Eighth Century

The 'heretics' of this century were two important personages. One was the Imam Ibn-i-Qayyum, who did not equate visiting the tomb of Prophet Ibrahim in Hebron with visiting the Ka'aba in Mecca and the Holy Prophet's Mosque and his tomb in Medina. He was imprisoned, humiliated, lashed and tortured.

The other was Sufi Taj-ud-Din Sibki, who was also plagued by the priesthood.

The Ninth Century

Maulana Abdul Rahman Jami, a popular saint, was accused of heresy.

Sayyed Muhammad of Jaunpur (India), Founder of Mahdvia Order of Mysticism, was branded an infidel, because he claimed to be the Mahdi of his time.

Sheikh Alaee was the leader of the Mahdi Movement in Bengal. The ulemas declared that the Sheikh should be chastised and then beheaded.

The Tenth Century

Maulana Ahmad Bihari (India), a venerable sage, was martyred in Delhi for his supposed blasphemous writings.

Sufi Bayazeed Sarhadi went to Peshawar to preach his views and was declared a renegade and a backslider.

The Eleventh Century

Sage Ali Thani was the Mujaddid or Reformer of his century. Naturally his business was to straighten the crookedness that had crept into the religion in the course of a century. This led to his struggles with the priesthood, who accused him of heresy at the Imperial court of Delhi. He escaped punishment, but was kept in prison.

Sufi Sarmad, an Armenian, turned Muslim and came to India. His strange behaviour got him into trouble with the ulemas and mullas and he was sentenced to be beheaded. As the executioner with sword in hand advanced towards him in front of the Juma Mosque, Delhi, he recited these verses of his: On account of an uproar we were awakened from the sleep of non-existence and opened our eyes. We saw that the night of tribulation had not ended yet, so we went to sleep again.

Muhammad Bin Ibrahim was a Persian exegete, whose writings were clear and easily understood by all, while the mullas and ulemas believed that religious expositions should be foggy. This difference of opinion led to his being declared an infidel.

The Twelfth Century

Maulana Masoom Ali Shah Meer was a sufi in Deccan, South India, where he got into religious tussles with the priest class who contrived and convinced the King Ali Murad Khan that the sufi was a backslider and a traitor to his kingdom. The sufi was murdered, and the ears and noses of his followers were cut off, and their beards were shaved off.

Shah Wali Ullah of Delhi was the Mujaddid-Reformer of the century, who translated the Holy Quran into Persian, which was then the official language of India. This enraged the priesthood, for no Muslim had ever dared to translate the Holy Word of God from Arabic into any other language before. They plotted to kill the translator, and engaged ruffians who surrounded him as he came out of the mosque after the afternoon prayer. By some miracle the ruffians did not do anything to Shah Sahib, who came away unharmed, and the opposition to him gradually died down. The world of Muslims reveres the venerable Shah Sahib now.

Mirza Mazhar Jan-i-Janan was a great sufi poet and a lover of literature. He was shot and killed by bullets, regarded as the work of the bigoted mullas.

Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab was a Najdi Arab and a Reformer of Islam of his time and place. He was also the Founder of Wahabi Movement. He was declared a heretic by the Mufti and Imam of the Holy Ka'aba Mosque in Mecca. Most of the Arabs of Saudi Arabia, including the Royal Family, are Wahabis now.

The Thirteenth Century

Maulvi Abdullah Ghaznawi, a steadfast scholar of Islam, got into trouble with the half-educated court mullas of Afghanistan and was exiled. He was exiled in the reign of one Amir, and when he returned in the reign of the next Amir, he was humiliated and then imprisoned, where he died.

Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautwi was a disciple of Shah Abdul Ghani of Delhi, the Founder of the famous Deoband

(India) Seminary of Islamic Study. Maulana Qasim was a popular Muslim leader and a formidable debater against the leaders of other religions. He was declared an apostate and infidel, by 12 ulemas of Mecca and 32 of Medina, because he held that the coming of a prophet could not and would not abrogate the position of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as the *khataman-Nabiyyeen*, the Seal of the Prophets.

Tantum religio potuit swadere malorum! So great were the enormities that religion could induce human beings to perpetrate. So wrote Lucretius the Roman Epicurean Philosopher even before the coming of Christianity. (Translated by historian Arnold Toynbee.)

When in the seventh century AD the world had sunk to the depth of unrighteousness, God had sent His Seal of the Prophets and through him His perfect Religion of Islam in the Quran for mankind. Soon after the Message of Islam was delivered, the Messenger-Prophet had left this world. The task of taking Islam to mankind or bringing mankind to Islam was entrusted to the Prophet's Companions, who were taught and practised esoteric Islam or Sufism (so says, among others, Ibn Khaldun in his Muquaddima, though the name 'Sufism' had not yet been invented). Just as during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Islam could not be preached peacefully, unhindered in Arabia, which necessitated and compelled wars between Muslims and polytheist Arabia, the same happened after the Prophet between Muslim Arabia and non-Muslim world around. The Companions of the Prophet lived, fought and died, all for God, and not for themselves, so says Sir John Glubb in his *Great Arab Conquest*. The phenomenal progress of Islam was maintained during 25 years of the reigns of the first, second and third Caliphs—Abu Bakr,

(The substance of the above statements of the last thirteen Hijra centuries has been taken from the Urdu booklet, *Chosen Saints of God and the Bigoted Mullas*, by Maulana Dost Muhammad Shahid, and translated into English by Mr Muhammad Akram Khan Ghauri, published by The London Mosque, 16 Gressenhall Road, London SW18 5QL.)

Umar and Othman—when the call of Islam had reached North Africa in the West and Oxus River in the East. This progress was arrested by the eruption of dissensions which killed the third Caliph and plagued the fourth Caliph Ali with civil wars and ultimately killed him also.

Thus ended the Islamic Republic of the Righteous Caliphs, and began the hereditary monarchy of the Umayyads, with Muawiya as the King, misnamed as ‘Caliph’. This was the first major deviation from Islam. Although the forces of Quranic Revelations and God’s continued grace took Islam further afield for a century or so, and kept Muslim supremacy for a few more centuries, the esoteric Islam receded gradually as the Companions of the Prophet and their immediate successors died out, and the exoteric Islam established itself with the bigoted ulemas and mullas at the helm. The Muslim world became more and more this-worldly, secular, fragmented and disunited, fighting for themselves and not for God any more. In thirteen hundred years the benighted priesthood severely persecuted 43 known great sons of Islam as we have stated above, including 15 of them who were foully murdered. The misdeeds of each century made the Muslims of later centuries ashamed of themselves, though the newer misdeeds still continued. As exoteric Islam became one of the many religions of the world and the original idea of Islam for all mankind was forgotten, the greater part of the world remained non-Muslim. God’s grace was withdrawn. The punishment came in the form of Mongol invasion, Christian Crusades, and the European imperial domination of the latter days.

Now we are entering the fourteenth century, which is crucial for us, as well as our immediate concern.

The Fourteenth Century Hijra (AD 1879–1979)

By the beginning of the fourteenth century of the Hijra and the last quarter of the nineteenth century AD, the European world ascendancy, headed by Britain, was complete. All non-West European countries of the world were ruled either directly or

controlled through their indebtedness by one of the four European great powers, chiefly Britain. Only the United States retained its independence. Britannia ruled the waves and Pax Britannica imposed peace on the world. Britain was the mistress of the world, home of science and technology, industry and the workshop of the world. Naturally, the unchallenged Britain and West Europe believed that it was the spontaneous development of European civilisation which had reached its climax and it was to last for ever. The inherent superiority of the West Europeans made them the natural rulers and owners of all non-European peoples, who had merely been there before, which fact did not confer on them any rights over the lands they lived in. The West Europeans had become so perfectly civilised that wars between them were now unthinkable... About this time in 1897 there came the Diamond Jubilee of 60 glorious years of the great Queen Victoria. London became full of the high and mighty from the ends of the earth as guests to celebrate the occasion. The naval and military mights of Britain, the economic and financial affluences, the social glitters and pageantries, dazzled and dumbfounded the Sultan of Turkey, the Caliph of Islam, many emperors and kings, bejewelled maharajas and nawabs of India—the brightest jewel of the British Empire—and sultans, nawabs and chieftains of Afro-Asia; as well as the President and Senators of the United States, which was not yet accepted as a great power. They all returned home, captivated or envious or fearful or all three. (Paraphrased from *Mankind and Mother Earth* by the historian Arnold Toynbee, OUP.)

It was not only the Europeans who had tremendous confidence in themselves and believed in their superiority and in their science-based, everlasting civilisation; it was also the leaders of the non-European world, including the Muslims, who grudgingly conceded the point that the unassailable European civilisation had come to stay. This produced great confusion of thought among the Muslims, whose confidence in Islam was shattered. Ziya Gokalp in Turkey, Taha Hussain in Egypt and Muslim intellectuals in other countries frantically advised their respective

peoples to get out of the rut of Islam and plunge into European civilisation as quickly as possible. The apologist Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, of Aligarh University fame in India, thought Islam and European civilisations were the same good things and should be allied together. Jalal Uddin Afghani roamed round the Muslim world with his Pan-Islamic idea. The orthodox Muslim ulemas and mullas wished to fight jihad against the Europeans with daggers and swords facing machine guns. The great upheavals of jihad actually started against the British by the Mahdi in Sudan (1885), which did not free the Muslim world, not even the Sudan itself . . . About this time, the Christian leaders were also having tempestuous times from the secularists in Europe, who believed God was dead, if He ever lived. As more and more scientific inventions came into popular use, changing the religion-based traditional society into a science-based industrial secular society, the Church leaders were fleeing from the intellectual onslaughts of the Darwinists, Marxists, atheists and agnostics. Seeing no future for Christianity in Europe, they fled to the overseas empires as Christian missionaries, making great success among the heathens, converting them to Christianity, including some Muslims also. In these circumstances, Muslim ulemas squirmed and were discomfited, as the Christian missionaries asserted that the European military, political and scientific successes in the world were due to Christianity. See! Islam could do nothing like this, they seemed to say. In these controversies, the Punjab was the worst affected area where Muslims were at the lowest ebb, having suffered the ordeals of Sikh rule until the British conquered the Punjab in 1879 when they regained their freedom to practise and preach Islam again under the British.

We have already said before and repeat it again that the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first one and a half decades of the twentieth had been the acme of the golden age of the Europeans, headed by Britain. But these were the days of most humiliation and depression for the Muslim and Afro-Asia leaders. At this time there was only one man who saw the dire condition of the Muslim world, riddled with various misconcep-

tions of Islam, felt deeply about it, and yet remained unruffled. This man was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, Punjab India. Born in 1835, as he grew up he spent most of his time in prayers, devotions and the study of the Quran, Hadith and Islamic literature. In his mature life he found Islam being assailed from all sides—from Christian missionaries, Arya Samajists, Brahmo Samajists, Secularists and others. With his pen he parried them all effectively and earned accolades from Muslim ulemas, leaders and the community, culminating in triumphant world acclaims for his paper, *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*, in an international religious conference held at Lahore in 1894. From the middle of the 70s of the last century, he had begun to receive God's revelations, which he had recorded in his 80 books, mostly in Urdu and some in Arabic and Persian. Under Divine guidance in January 1891, he proclaimed that he was the Promised Messiah-Mahdi prophesied in the Holy Quran and the Hadith. This announcement at once turned many of his former friends and Muslim divines into his deadly enemies, which was also prophesied in the Hadith, as well as in many saintly predictions in the past. The Muslim divines in the latter days would develop Jewish mentality like the ancient Pharisees and lawyers who had plagued the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary. In a similar manner the Muslim 'Jews' of the latter days would plague the Muslim Messiah-Mahdi. The Christian missionaries, Arya Samajists and Muslims joined together with alacrity to oppose the claims of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, and made a great hullabaloo.

The strongest controversy raged around the Quranic verse which says: Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and Seal of the Prophets. Allah has full knowledge of all things (33:41). For centuries the Muslim world believed and still believes that this verse meant that there would never be any more prophets to come; the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the last Prophet of the world. As Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be a Prophet, a Messenger and a Warner, he was outside the pale of Islam—an apostate.

In contrast, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, under God's

revelations, completely believed that the Advent of Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, and the coming of the Quran and Islam as the final religion of mankind, had closed all national prophet-hoods, such as those of Hindus, Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians, etc., leaving open only the Islamic prophethood. No prophet of any other religion can now come, except of Islam. A prophet is he whom God has favoured with his commands and messages to impart to the believers. There could be three kinds of prophets. First, the highest kind is a law-bearing prophet who brings a new religion, like Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses and Muhammad, etc.; secondly, the non-law-bearing, independent prophets, owing no allegiance to a law-bearing prophet, like those who came among the Israelites after Moses; thirdly, the non-law-bearing prophet whose prophethood is derived through his allegiance to a law-bearing prophet, whose light he reflects as the moon reflects the light of the sun. The question now arises: Is Mirza Sahib a prophet? The answer is yes and no. He is not a prophet of either the first or the second kind by virtue of his being an extremely devoted follower of the Holy Prophet, whose reflection and replica he is. His is the prophethood which is a reflection of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who prophesied the coming in the latter days of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, peace be on him.

The Muslim world believes that the Messiah Jesus was not crucified, instead a substitute was. Like the Christians, they believe that the Messiah Jesus had gone up bodily to heaven and is still alive there. The prophecy about the coming of the Promised Messiah means that the Messiah Jesus will come down for the second time. He went up (presumably) in Middle Eastern jubbah, but would come down wearing two yellow sheets. He went up as the Christ of the Christians, and will come down (presumably) as Dalai Lama of the Tibetan Buddhists? But he will land on the white minaret of Damascus; and in 40 years he will break all the crosses and kill all the pigs of the world single-handed. Then he will convert the whole of mankind, not into Christianity or Buddhism, but into Islam. Those refusing to be converted would

be killed by him. The second coming of the Messiah Jesus who was a Prophet in his own right—and there is no way of unfrocking or de-prophetising him—will not infringe the Seal of the Prophets, or of Muhammad as the last Prophet. By this kind of belief the non-Ahmadi Muslim world refutes the claims of the Mirza Sahib as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi in Islam, because he had not bodily come down from heaven to Qadian.

In contrast, Hazrat Mirza Sahib, the Promised Messiah, said that God had revealed to him that Prophet Jesus did not die on the cross; he had only swooned. He recovered, met his disciples, and, unknown to anyone, he left Judaea-Palestine. He travelled to Persia, Afghanistan and Kashmir. In these places he met and preached among the ten 'lost' tribes of Israel, who had settled there after being captives of the Babylonians mentioned in the Bible. At the age of 120 years died Jesus, whose grave is in Srinagar, Kashmir, India. When this truth gradually breaks through the Judeo-Christian-Muslim clamorous opposition, and gets diffused in the world, and there is still no sign of Jesus from heaven, then mankind will take to Islam: and thereby will eliminate the crosses and no one will breed pigs any more. The prophecy about the two yellow sheets means that the coming Messiah will have two chronic ailments; Hazrat Mirza Sahib, the Promised Messiah, did have these; one from the abdomen upwards, and another from the abdomen downwards. Hazrat Mirza Sahib was the Promised Messiah of the fourteenth century of Islam, just as Jesus was the Promised Messiah of the fourteenth century of the Mosaic dispensation. There may be more Messiahs in the spirit of Jesus in the centuries to come, but Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, in person will never come again. This is the revealed truth from God to the Promised Messiah.

All this stung the orthodox Muslims and Christian missionaries into action. Just as the Jewish High Priest, Caiaphas, had accused Messiah Jesus of infidelity and rebellion before Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator of Judaea; the head of the Christian missionaries, Dr Henry Martyn Clark, had accused Messiah Ahmad of a serious criminal case before Captain M. W. Douglas,

the British District Magistrate of Gurdaspur, Punjab, in August 1897. The charge was that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (the Promised Messiah) had sent a youth called Abdul Hamid to murder Dr Clark. Intensive investigations by the Magistrate proved conclusively that Dr Clark had conspired with and trimmed the youth Hamid to give false evidence, but the youth broke down and spilled the beans. Captain Douglas discharged the defendant honourably and told him that he could prosecute Dr Clark for bringing a false charge against him, and that he, the Magistrate, would give him leave to do so. To the chagrin of the Muslims and Christians, the Promised Messiah said that he did not want to prosecute Dr Clark in the courts of this world; his case was pending before the Highest Judge in heaven.

As the Reformer, the Promised Messiah's first job was to return to the original form of Islam as existed in the time of the four Righteous Caliphs after the demise of the Holy Prophet, from the chaotic, sprawling Islam of the Muslims, as he found in the fourteenth century Hijra (end of the nineteenth century AD).

With this in view, under Divine command, he inaugurated the Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam in 1889, inviting all and sundry to join in. This entailed taking Ba'iat or making covenant with the Promised Messiah, giving him a pledge to live by practising Islam: carrying out commands of God, refraining from His prohibitions, and following the practice of the Holy Prophet. This vested central authority in the Promised Messiah, in his Caliphs, which had to be obeyed by every Ahmadi Muslim. Either one is a true Muslim or not at all; there is no halfway about it. Only a tiny minority joined the Movement, which began to grow amidst fierce oppositions and persecution, but which has grown with branches now to the ends of the earth, as God had promised. This Movement is maintained by the contributions of individual Ahmadis and not by the petrodollars. The bulk of Muslims remained and still remain outside and opposed to the Ahmadiyyah Movement. The Promised Messiah had taught the Ahmadis that persuasion and reasoning, with God's help, would bring mankind

to Islam, and not the warring jihad for which conditions in our age did not exist. The aim of life in Islam is to live righteously which could be brought about effectively by following the Shariah laws of Islam meticulously.

It was and still is different to the non-Ahmadi Muslims as well as non-Western peoples who have been converted to the idea that the highest achievements of life have been reached by the European nations who were powerful, rich, comfortable, because they were 'developed' and 'advanced', individually and nationally in a competitive world. So the 'backward' Muslim countries should become 'civilised, developed and advanced', that is, become British, German or French, etc. They believed that the stagnant Islam was by itself a hindrance to this ideal. Their only handicap, they thought before the two world wars, was their subjugation to European imperialists. Once they had freed themselves, they would go ahead, developing and advancing, under the name of Islamic socialism, or Islamic capitalism, or Islamic Western civilisation. When all countries of the world were equally developed, advanced and civilised, powerful, rich and comfortable, they would love one another and world peace would come.

In contrast, the Promised Messiah knew better. The trouble of the Muslim world was deeper than they knew, which mere independence alone could not cure; return to Islam could. Because all Muslim peoples were under one or the other foreign domination, there was a semblance of unity among them, which was deceptive. God had revealed to the Promised Messiah in 1905 about the developed and advanced and civilised nations, the greatest of them being the British Empire, which was to last untroubled for eight more years, then 'a world calamity with rivers of blood would overtake it' (Great War?), and it would wobble on and then vanish. (Incidentally, Sir Winston Churchill, the famous British statesman, believed in 1928 that the British Empire would last for a thousand years.) The Western civilisation would go on unsteadily for a while then scientifically destroy itself by its own hands. After this, another kind of developing and advancing would ensue under Ahmadiyyah Islam . . .

Says God in the Quran (65:8–10):

How many a civilisation turned in disdain from the commandment of its Lord and His Messengers; and then We made with it a terrible reckoning and chastised it with a horrible chastisement.

So it tasted the mischief of its action, and the end of its affair was loss.

God prepared for them a terrible chastisement. So fear God, O men of intelligence!

The Promised Messiah died 72 years ago in 1908. Now in 1980 if we look back to see how the non-Ahmadi Muslim world had fared since gaining independence, when restraints by foreign dominations had been withdrawn, we find that soon they began to develop and advance and were at each other's throats in full freedom from Morocco to Indonesia. To begin with, their disunity had cost them Palestine, which could not be recovered by disunited millions in the Muslim world from a handful of Jews who had got the West in their pockets. Jihad situation prevails all over the Muslim world among themselves, and actually jihad took place between Pakistan and Bangladesh, Algeria and Morocco in Western Sahara, Libya and Egypt, Jordanians and Palestinians and now continues between Iraq and Iran. None of these conflicts could be resolved, because the so-called Muslims have no Islam with them. God commands them in the Quran to hold fast to the rope of Allah all together, which rope they have thrown away instead. God commands them to make one nation of them all, while they have made 40 nations of themselves and still more splits may come. God commands them to fight the insolent ones together, and if two Muslim groups were fighting among themselves, to make peace between them; Iraq-Iran war is a challenge, but they do not know how to tackle it, as their respective Islams are different. God commands them not to violate the Holy Mosque of Ka'aba, but they indulged in shooting there! The Muslim behaviour among themselves has made the claim of Islam as a peace-creating religion sound bogus to the non-Muslim world. God commands them not to create sects, yet they have

created umpteen sects, excommunicating each other and calling each other apostates.

The Wahabi Saudi Arabia is staunchly opposed to the Ahmadis, whom they brand as apostates, though they themselves had been called apostates by the ulemas of Mecca and Medina until they conquered the Hedjaz in the 1920s. In my younger days in India if you did not like anyone you called him a 'wahabi'; the word 'wahabi' was a word of abuse. Now the Wahabis have become the foremost Muslims, the champions of Islam, by building glittering mosques round the world with gushing petrodollars. Yet the Arab world is scared stiff of Islam as propounded by the Islamic Republic of Iran, because they believe that what is good for their monarchial families is good for Islam. Some Middle Eastern rulers want the Western Dajjal to save their Islam, and other rulers want the Russian Dajjal to save their Islam, as both groups of rulers are impotent by themselves. No wonder the Holy Prophet was worried about Arab wealth, not about Arab poverty, so says the Hadith in Sahih Muslim.

This writer earnestly appeals to our non-Ahmadi Muslim brothers to ponder over a lot of anomalies in Islam accumulated in the course of centuries which could not be straightened by themselves, nor should they be left unattended. These need to be resolved, and resolved through someone sent by God. This someone was the Promised Messiah-Mahdi, who said if he had not come someone else would have come, sent by God instead. Those who deny him as the Reformer of the fourteenth century Hijra cannot produce another claimant who was, now that we are already inside the fifteenth century. With their disbelief in the Promised Messiah, they will have to believe willy-nilly that God has forgotten to keep His promise in the fourteenth century, and the Holy Prophet had made a little mistake by predicting his coming (God save us!). The Jews denied Jesus as the Messiah, and they have been waiting in vain for two thousand years for their Messiah to come; they shall wait for ever; the same will happen to the Muslims.

Just as Islam will look a cock-eyed religion if we, like the

priesthood of old, now disown the Imams Abu Hanifa, Bukhari and Al-Gazzali and discard their literary works, so will 'Islam' of the Muslim world look a cock-eyed religion in times to come, if they disbelieve in the Promised Messiah-Mahdi and ignore his revealed prophecies and literary output.

Increasing number of books by the Promised Messiah are being translated and published in English. I request the readers of this paper to read as many as possible. Some of these books are mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this paper.

Those of us who live in Britain (or any other Western country) have special responsibilities to Islam and to Britain. We frantically ran out of what we call Islamic countries to live in un-Islamic countries. Why? Is it because we love this world and its amenities more than Allah, Islam and the Prophet? Or because, lacking Islam in our so-called Islamic countries, where we had developed satanic tendencies, we are attracted to and feel quite at home in the un-Islamic or even anti-Islamic countries? For two reasons the above estimations do not apply to Ahmadi Muslims. One, their main concern is to carry the Message of Islam to the world, or to contribute towards it; two, Ahmadi Muslims in this country are mainly Pakistanis of the Punjab, many of whom had to get away from there because of the savagery of Ahmadi-bashing Pakistanis, the very Pakistanis who clamour against the Pakibashing Britons in Britain.

While we are at it, we might as well tell what could happen to Ahmadis in a Muslim country. Two Afghan Ahmadis, devoted followers of the Promised Messiah, were foully murdered by the order of the chief Qadhi and the Amir of Afghanistan. One was Sahibzada Abdul Latif, a well-known saintly national figure, and his disciple, Maulvi Abdur Rahman, was the other. Maulvi Abdur Rahman was strangled to death in prison in 1901, because he would neither deny his adherence to, nor the teaching concerning jihad he learned from the Promised Messiah, which was that persuasion and reasoning should be pursued in this age when believing in and preaching Islam is not forbidden, instead of warring jihad. Venerable Sahibzada Abdul Latif was made to

stand in a pit which was then filled up to his waist; the chief Mufti cast the first stone and the Amir the second, and then the crowd stoned him until he died and was covered up with stones. All this because Sahibzada would neither repudiate his belief in the Promised Messiah nor his belief that Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, would never return to earth from heaven . . . After enduring severe persecutions for 25 years in Afghanistan, Sahibzada Abdul Latif's family escaped to British India.

Had there been Muslim rule in India or even in the Punjab instead of British rule, during the last 32 years of the Promised Messiah's life when he had been receiving God's revelation, the world would have witnessed greater tragedies and horrors than those mentioned above.

We have mentioned before our responsibility to Islam and Britain where we live. Our only excuse for being in an un-Islamic country should be to sacrifice part of our time and the money God has given us in order to preach the true Message of Islam to the indigenous people and leave the results to Allah. If we succeed in this enterprise, we shall avert the coming destruction of the West which is on the cards. If we fail, then at least we will have tried to fulfil Allah's command. With this in view, I invite you to join the Ahmadiyyah Movement, which has the strongest arguments against all other intellectuals, religious or secular.

Now we will end by quoting a few relevant excerpts.

Said the Promised Messiah:

Hearken, all ye people. This is a prophecy of Him Who created heaven and earth. He will spread this Community of His in all countries and will make it supreme over all, through reason and arguments. The days are coming, indeed they are near, when this will be the only religion which will be held in honour. God will bestow extraordinary blessings on this religion and Movement. He will frustrate everyone who seeks to destroy it. This supremacy will last till the Judgment Day.

. . . The Holy Prophet, however, had announced a very clear and definite sign of the appearance of the Mahdi which it was

not in the power of anyone to manufacture or improvise. Darqutni, an eminent and recognised authority on hadees, had recorded that the Holy Prophet said:

For our Mahdi there are appointed two signs which have never been manifested for any other claimant since the creation of the heavens and the earth. They are that at his advent there shall occur an eclipse of the moon on the first of its appointed nights, and an eclipse of the sun on the middle one of its appointed days and both will occur in the same month of Ramadhan.

The eclipse of the moon occurs on the 13th, 14th or 15th night of a lunar month, and the eclipse of the sun takes place on the 27th, 28th or 29th of the lunar month. The sign mentioned by the Holy Prophet, therefore, was that the moon would be eclipsed on the 13th night of the lunar month, and the eclipse of the sun would take place on the 28th of the same month, which will be the month of Ramadhan. This sign was to appear after and not before the advent of the Mahdi. It so happened that an eclipse of the moon occurred on Thursday night, the 13th of Ramadhan, 1311 Hijra (21st March, 1894), and the eclipse of the sun occurred on the 28th of the same month of Ramadhan (6th April, 1894), in exact accord with the prophecy of the Holy Prophet. The same phenomenon was repeated in the United States of America in 1895.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad began to receive revelation in 1876, and as time passed his experience of revelation multiplied progressively. Every one of his revelations was clearly fulfilled according to its tenor at its due time; some of them that related to future events have been fulfilled from time to time since his death and some await fulfilment.

In 1891, under Divine direction, he claimed to be the Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet. Thereafter it was revealed to him that he was also the Promised Messiah and was indeed the Prophet whose advent had been foretold in the principal religions of the world. One of the revelations vouchsafed

to him was: Champion of God in the mantles of all the Prophets. He was, however, at pains to emphasise all the time and on every occasion that whatever God Almighty had bestowed upon him, out of His grace, was in consequence of his utter devotion and obedience to the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and that in himself he was nothing and claimed no merit. He was thus a perfect spiritual reflection of the Holy Prophet and in him was fulfilled the Second Advent of the Holy Prophet promised in 62:4 (the Quran). (Quoted from *Ahmadiyyat, the Renaissance of Islam*, by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan.)

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, has said:

If I am called *Nabi* or *Rasul* by God, how can I deny it? These titles have been applied to me by God Himself. How can I fail to use them? Why should I fear anyone but Him? I say on oath in the name of God Who has sent me, to fabricate anything in Whose name is to earn His curse—that He has sent me after making me the Promised Messiah, that I have full faith in the manifest revelation vouchsafed to me, the truth of which has become established for me by sign after sign. My faith in it is as firm as is my faith in the verses of the Holy Quran. There is no difference, not the slightest. I am ready to stand in the House of God and declare on oath that God Who speaks to me is the same God Who spoke to Moses, to Jesus and to the Holy Prophet Muhammad the Elect (on whom be peace). Earthly signs have witnessed to my truth as well as heavenly signs. Heaven has witnessed for me as well as the earth. Both have declared that I am the Promised Vicegerent. I was to be rejected also, according to the prophecies. Those whose hearts are shrouded by prejudice do not accept. But I know God will help me the way He has always helped His Messengers. My opponents shall fail. They have not the help of God.

Remember wherever I have denied being a prophet (*Nabuwat*) I have denied it in the sense that I am no independent bearer of a Law or Shariah nor am I an independent prophet, a prophet in my own right. But in the sense that I have received spiritual

grace from my Mentor and Master, my *Rasul*, that I have been awarded his name and have been gifted with knowledge of the unseen through him, and because of him, I am a *Rasul* and *Nabi* but without a new Shariah.

Being a *Nabi* in this sense I have never denied. In this sense God has called me a *Nabi* and a *Rasul*. So in this sense I do not deny being a *Nabi* or *Rasul*. (Quoted from *A Misunderstanding Removed*, by the Promised Messiah.)

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, has said:

Those who, in their haste, have adopted an attitude of ill thinking and are indifferent to the difficulties with which this Movement is faced, have not acted righteously. God Almighty in His Holy Word says: Allah accepts only from the righteous (5:28). This means that it is only the prayer of the righteous that is accepted by God. That is why it has been directed that one should not join a prayer service led by one whose own prayer is not likely to find acceptance. It has ever been the stance of those honoured in the faith that a person who opposes the truth is gradually deprived of his faith. He who does not believe in the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, is a disbeliever, but he who does not accept the Mahdi and Messiah will also lose his faith, and the end is the same. There is first opposition, and finally faith is lost. This is not a small matter but is a matter involving faith and is a question of heaven and hell. To deny me is not merely to reject me but is the denial of Allah and His Holy Prophet, on whom be peace and blessings of Allah. He who denies me, before denying me considers God Almighty (God forbid) a liar. He sees that internal and external disorders have exceeded the bounds and he conceives that God Almighty, despite His promise: We ourself have sent down this Exhortation and We shall surely safeguard it (15:10) has not taken any measure of reform. On the surface he believes that in verse 56 of Chapter 24 of the Holy Quran, God Almighty promised that He would establish a line of Successors among the followers of the Holy Prophet

as a line of Successors was established among the followers of Moses but thinks that (God forbid) He has not fulfilled that promise, and there is no Khalifa at present among the followers of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Not only this, but such a one will also have to adopt the position that (God forbid) it is not true, as the Holy Quran has said, that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was a Prophet like Moses, inasmuch as for a perfect resemblance between Moses and the Holy Prophet, it was necessary that at the beginning of the fourteenth century of Islam there should have appeared among the Muslims a Messiah in the same way as in the Mosaic dispensation there came a Messiah in the fourteenth century after Moses. Further, he who denies me would also have to deny the verse of the Holy Quran: And among others from among them who have not yet joined them (62:4) which prophesies the advent of a reflection of Ahmad in the latter days. In the same way there are many verses of the Holy Quran which such a one will have to deny. I go further and claim that he who denies me will have to repudiate the whole of the Holy Quran from beginning to end. Consider, therefore, whether my denial is an easy matter. I do not say on my own authority but call God Almighty to witness that the truth is that he who forsakes me and denies me, even if he does so only by his conduct and not by his tongue, rejects the whole of the Holy Quran and forsakes God. (Alhakam, 17th March, 1906; quoted from *Truth about Ahmadiyyat*, by Imam B. A. Rafiq.)

Says God in the Quran, 69:45 (A. J. Arberry translation): Had he (the Holy Prophet or anyone else) invented against Us any saying, We would have seized him by the right hand, then We would surely have cut his life-vein and not one of you could have defended him.

May Allah guide those who read these pages.

30th December, 1980

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